

**S'gor should focus on governance, delivery**  
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I sometimes wonder if our leaders and politicians really understand the reason why they are elected to power and handed the mandate to form a government by the rakyat.

Reading through the news reports and looking at the situation on the ground, many of these politicians think they are still living in the days where people meekly accepted whatever decisions and policies made, as well as unquestionably accepting whatever explanations offered by the government.

People these days are far better educated, more demanding and certainly not easily convinced by empty rhetoric, excuses and promises.

When the rakyat of Selangor gave the mandate to Khalid Ibrahim and his Pakatan Rakyat government, they wanted a more democratic, transparent, people-friendly and cleaner form of governance.

Unfortunately, looking at the last two years, there is a big deficit between the rakyat's expectations and what Khalid and his administration has delivered.

The scandalous way the Selangor Select Committee on Competency, Accountability and Transparency (Selcat) handled the sand-mining controversy is merely one of many issues that has badly tainted the administration of this former corporate leader turned politician.

While Selcat was quick and efficient in punishing elected representatives from the opposition (BN), the committee's conduct in the case of the sand-mining scandal and previous cases involving politicians from Pakatan Rakyat has left the impression that it is merely a political tool and not an impartial mechanism to promote good governance.

While *Merakyatkan Ekonomi Selangor* is a catchy and feel-good slogan, we have failed to observe this in action. Instead of people-friendly policies, what we see is wasteful public spending and a clear bias towards business interests over those of the rakyat.

Take for example the aid for old people. It was launched with much fanfare some time ago but in reality is a politically motivated programme since applicants are required to get the endorsement of local politicians in order to get the grant.

Anywhere one goes in the state it is clear that new developments are taking place at a rapid pace with scant regards to both environment and town planning guidelines. Worse still, is the explosion of unhealthy businesses, like video game outlets, massage parlours, karaoke bars and pubs – which are causing numerous social ills.

There are countless giant billboards all over Selangor supporting the state administration's stance on the issue of water privatisation. There are state-sponsored blogs and positive coverage by media organisations that are supposed to "provide the correct information" to the people.

These billboards and media campaigns must have caused millions and many of the people behind these seem to be politically allied to the ruling party. As I see it, the only benefactors of these are certainly not the rakyat but the politicians who are using it to buttress their political base and possibly provide employment and business opportunities for

their supporters.

There was much outcry and anger over the local councils before the last general election – and we expected Khalid to elect only competent and clean candidates to fill the positions. However, the performance of MPK, MBPJ, MPSJ and others clearly showed that things have actually gone worse. Not only that their performances have been poor but we can see how the politicians and state leaders are controlling and influencing the decision making of these councils.

Khalid seems to be far more pre-occupied with words than actions. The Freedom of Information Act (FIA), asset declaration, Selcat and local council elections are some examples where nice- sounding policies and initiatives have resulted in zero action. It sounds highly hypocritical of him to be opposed to sports-betting when these unhealthy businesses have been allowed to run rampant under his watch.

Many of us have not seen a single positive improvement in terms of policies or actions from Khalid's government yet. Since he's half way through his tenure, it is time for Khalid to take a hard look into his administration's performance so far and look at ways to improve it.

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